



# CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

## **STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN CHRISTOPHER SHAYS IN SUPPORT OF H.B. 5747, TO REINSTATE LYME DISEASE LAB REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

I want to express my support for H.B. 5747, which will reinstate the requirement of laboratory reporting for Lyme Disease (LD). This requirement was suspended in 2004.

Because Connecticut residents are among the most severely afflicted by LD, Connecticut has led the fight to prevent and fight the disease. It seems to me more data on LD, including its prevalence, would help us fight it, which is why the reporting is so critical.

All of the advocates here today to testify, as well as thousands more around the state, deserve our thanks for keeping this issue in the forefront of legislators' minds. Their dedication to helping those afflicted with LD is worthy of our praise.

LD continues to be a rapidly growing infectious disease, accounting for more than 90 percent of all vector-borne illnesses reported in the United States. The annual totals of reported cases increased 26-fold between 1982 and 1995, with a cumulative total of more than 82,000 cases during that period.

The recognized clinical spectrum of LD is expanding as the disease is more intensively studied, although major factors in its natural history and pathogenesis remain unknown.

Increased funding to expand the knowledge of treatments, detection and prevention of LD, will hopefully lead to a cure for this painful and debilitating disease.